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ABSTRACT

Conflict is part of human interaction. A review of some of the literature on the history, as well as on the educational and psychological impact of violence in South African schools, is provided here. It is suggested that intervention and prevention strategies to deal with the effect of violence include training to provide market-related skills to a "lost generation," organizational structures--involving the school and the community--to deal with crisis situations, psycho-educational programs to help students cope with conflict, and ways to address psychological and behavioral problems resulting from conflict. A study was conducted to obtain the opinion of educational psychologists on their role regarding school violence. Results indicated that irrespective of whether the respondents were exposed to violence in the schools they worked in, they agreed that school violence had an extremely negative effect on the educational climate and should be dealt with urgently. Participants made many suggestions on how to improve the situation, but much of this advice was vague in terms of practical implications. The psychologists regarded their main function as providing psychological counseling and therapy to children and their families. It is suggested that the training needs in educational psychology and in violence-related skills be addressed. Contains 61 references. (RJM)

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SCHOOL VIOLENCE: PSYCHOLOGISTS' PERSPECTIVE

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This paper gives a review of some of the literature on the history as well as on the educational and psychological impact of violence in South African schools. Intervention and prevention strategies to deal with its effects include training to provide market-related skills to a 'lost generation', organizational structures - involving the school and the community - to deal with crisis situations, psycho-educational programmes to help students cope with conflict, and addressing psychological and behavioural problems resulting from the conflict. The manifestation of school violence in South Africa and how this problem is being dealt with are emphasized at the symposium on school violence, children and trauma (APA Convention). A study was conducted at educational-psychological services to determine what educational psychologists saw as their role in dealing with school violence. The results of this study were integrated with relevant literature on addressing educational needs in South Africa. Various political, social and economic factors underly the educational problems - including school violence - and systemic intervention that acknowledges the context of these problems is therefore needed. This implies the involvement of students, school personnel, parents and the community. Although educational psychologists should extend their skills to community consultative and preventative work, a professional trained in multidisciplinary skills would be better equipped to initiate and mediate such programmes. The educational psychologists regarded their main function as being to provide psychological counselling and therapy to children and their families. It is therefore imperative that the training needs in educational psychology in general, and in violence related skills specifically, should be addressed. The results of this study are emphasized at an integrated paper session dealing with international issues in school psychology (International Congress of Psychology).

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The following definitions can be regarded as relevant to this paper.

> Aggression: **1.** An attack or harmful action, especially an unprovoked attack by one country against another. **2.** Any offensive activity, practice, etc. **3.** A hostile or destructive mental attitude or behaviour (The Collins English Dictionary, 1986).

Berkowitz (1993, p. 3 & p. 21) defined aggression as "any form of behavior that is intended to injure someone physically or psychologically" and aggressiveness as "a relatively persistent readiness to become aggressive in a variety of different situations". Injury is not always the main objective and one can distinguish between instrumental aggression with the aim of achieving an objective (coercion, power and dominance, and impression management) and hostile or emotional aggression with the aim of injuring the victim.

> Violence: **1.** The exercise or an instance of physical force, usually effecting or intended to effect injuries, destruction, etc. **2.** Powerful, untamed, or devastating force. **3.** Great strength of feeling, as in language, etc.; fervour. **4.** An unjust, unwarranted, or unlawful display of force, especially such as tends to overawe or intimidate. **5. Do violence to. a.** To inflict harm upon; damage or violate. **b.** To distort or twist the sense or intention of (The Collins English Dictionary, 1986).

Lisansky Gomberg (1993) regarded violence as aggression involving physical force and the inflicting of injury or damage on persons or property. Violence is an extreme form of aggression, "a deliberate attempt to do serious physical injury" (Berkowitz, 1993, p. 11). Most definitions of violence state that physical force is used with specific intent (to inflict injury, destroy, abuse, damage, violate, hurt or even kill) on another person, property or oneself (Page, Kitchin-Becker, Solovan, Golec & Hebert, 1992; Roper & Anderson, 1991; Schramm & Shuda, 1991; Van den Aardweg, 1987). Schramm and Shuda (1991) also referred to psychological violence where serious damage is inflicted even though physical force is not used. Roark (1993, p. 10) studied various classifications of types of violence and concluded with the following definition: "... behaviour which by intent, action, and/or outcome harms another person". This definition includes aggressive and defensive violence, overt and covert violence, instrumental and expressive violence as well as legitimate and illegitimate violence.

Violence is frequently perceived to be functional in reaching a goal such as political change. A distinction can be made between structural violence as enforcement of policies by the authority in power and reactionary violence by those who do not subscribe to this authority (Schramm & Shuda, 1991). Violence that is directed at the pattern of power relations rather than at particular individuals can also be called political violence (Taylor, 1994). This type of violence raises questions about the legitimacy of the existing political order and the established structures through which it maintains and secures power.

> Conflict: **1.** A struggle or clash between opposing forces; battle. **2.** A state of opposition between ideas, interests, etc.; disagreement or controversy. **3.** A clash, as between two appointments made for the same time. **4.** Opposition between two simultaneous but incompatible wishes or drives, sometimes leading to a state of emotional tension and thought to be responsible for neuroses. **5.** To come into opposition; clash. **6.** To fight (The Collins English Dictionary, 1986).

Conflict is part of human interaction although it might vary in frequency, intensity and duration. Conflict arises when two parties with mutually incompatible goals simultaneously perceive an opportunity to achieve their goals by blocking those of others (Van der Westhuizen, Steyn & Mosoge, 1991). Conflict, although it may sometimes be destructive of the social order, is necessary as a source of creative tension to preserve the social order. All conflict should therefore not be suppressed or resolved but managed in such a way that the positive aspects are maximized and the negative aspect minimized (Bondesio, 1992).

UNREST IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS AND ITS EFFECT ON THE EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE

Taylor (1994) discussed some of the factors that contributed to the culture of violence characteristic of South African society. Rapid urbanization, unemployment and the previous denial of access to education, health care, housing and work to a large section of the population, lead to battles over competing claims for power and resources. The struggle for monopoly of taxi ranks and routes could partly be blamed on the lack of an adequate public transport system. The efforts by various political parties to influence the negotiation process are reflected in the continued violence. Structural violence (violence by the state) has also contributed to this climate (Setiloane, 1991).

Political violence refers to an attack on the existing political order and the established structures through which it maintains and secures power. 'The struggle' in South Africa has been aimed at the discriminatory legislation, structures and practices of apartheid. Since the 1976 students' uprisings the black youth has been prominently involved in this conflict and violence (Möller & Maimane, 1992; Taylor, 1994). Green (1991) referred to an intense politicization of education. According to Van der Westhuizen *et al.* (1991) the mood of protest among black South Africans against the system found expression in schools in the form of unrest and student activism. In the 1980s students responded readily to the call to make South Africa ungovernable (Ramphele, 1991). The slogan 'liberation before education' was adopted (Green, 1991). Children became used to wielding power and refused to yield to the authority of parents whom they felt had failed them. Dissatisfaction with the educational system and the subsequent reaction by students also led to a deterioration of the relationship between teachers and students. Although teachers sympathized with the need to change the educational system (Möller & Maimane, 1992), the educational climate and the students' insolence, undisciplined behaviour and aggressiveness resulted in a lack of morale and motivation among especially secondary-school teachers. According to Green (1991), school disruptions in 1990 were among the worst with massive teacher strikes and pupil stay-aways.

The result was a lack of interest in education by a substantial number of youths and a breakdown in the culture of learning in South African schools (Youth in crisis, 1992). The terms 'lost generation' and 'marginalized youth' are used to describe approximately six million black youths between 10 years of age and the early 30s who do not go to school or have never gone to school and are unemployed (Challenor, 1992; Sowetan Comment, 1992). In many instances political actions degenerated into criminality and in some communities, the youth have developed a subculture in which crime and violence are the norm (Taylor, 1994).

Disruptions at schools continued in the years preceding the democratic election in April 1994. The school violence seemed to be concentrated in certain areas. The previous Department of Education and Training reported approximately 16 000 incidents of school related unrest for 1992. Many of these occurred in the Johannesburg area and on the East-Rand. In the regions now known as Gauteng (Schooling hit by on-going violence, 1992) and KwaZulu-Natal (No pupils so teachers stay away, 1994; Twenty-five Natal schools collapse, 1993) there were reports of schools that had to be closed because of violence in the surrounding areas. Various regions in the country reported disruption of classes and closure of mostly secondary schools due to violence and vandalism by the students ('Hidden agenda' behind chaos at Tvl schools, 1992; Luti, 1992; Nichols, 1993).

There was a notable increase in reports of gang related violence since 1994. The violence was again primarily restricted to certain areas. In the KwaZulu-Natal region violence in the communities (often politically motivated) had a negative effect on education and at one stage more than a million children in the region were apparently not attending school (Jackman & Miller, 1994). At the start of the new school year in 1996 the educational climate improved with substantial increases in enrolment figures, especially at schools which were previously empty because of violence in the areas. Despite optimism, school violence is still a tremendous problem especially in some areas of this region.

In KwaMashu (KwaZulu-Natal) primary as well as secondary schools reported harassment of pupils and teachers and even the killings of teachers by gangs of youths from outside the school (Kinders wyk uit skole oor bendes, 1996; Miller, 1994; Schmidt, 1995). This area has been plagued by violence due to political strife and a high unemployment rate. A teacher

boycott early in 1996 resulted in approximately 80 000 children not being in school - the teachers demanded security for their schools in the form of fencing and police protection (Armed guards for KwaMashu schools, 1996; Cothia, 1996).

At the end of 1995 and the beginning of 1996 primary and secondary schools in certain suburbs of Durban (KwaZulu-Natal) reported that students carried guns, knives, sticks and metal rods to school. There were clashes among students often involving gangs of young people from outside the school. This violence was regarded as racial (clashes between black and Indian groups), economic and criminal, and drugs and alcohol usage were also blamed. At some schools security personnel were employed. (Pupils carrying weapons. School gang warfare, 1996; Schmidt, 1995; Violence, drugs plague schools, 1995.)

During the second half of 1995, approximately 50 schools on the Cape Flats (Western Cape) reported attacks by teenage gangsters from outside the school; some schools had to be closed, pupils as well as teachers threatened to stay away from school until their safety could be guaranteed and the army was asked to protect these schools as it was felt that the security guards were not enough (Leerlinge op Vlakte wil staak vir hul veiligheid, 1995; Olckers na Vlakte oor geweld by skole, 1995; Skole-terreur moet nou in kiem gesmoor word, 1995). In Port Elizabeth (Eastern-Cape) there were allegations of drug lords and gangsters operating in schools and attacks by gangs on primary and secondary schools (Cooper, 1996). Again a demand was made for fencing and police protection.

In other parts of the country including Soweto and the West-Rand (Gauteng) there were sporadic reports of politically motivated or gang-related violence at schools. Serious racial incidents occurred in February 1995 at a school in the Western Cape (A repeat of Little Rock!, 1995), in August 1995 at a school in Gauteng (Racial clash at school: 9 suspended, 1995), in February 1996 at a school in the Free State (Trompsburg hoor gou oor meer swart leerlinge, 1996) as well as at a school in the Northern region, and from February until May 1996 at a school in the North West (Swart, 1996). In most of these cases previously white schools were requested to enrol black pupils. The way in which the integration process was handled, caused discontent among the black pupils as well as the white parents in the areas.

Despite political changes and major efforts by various parties - including the students themselves - to restore a culture of learning and teaching, violence involving school children continues. A recent report refers to about 700 high school pupils who "burnt tyres in the street, stoned police and passers-by and threw petrol bombs" (Youths hurl petrol bombs in Mamelodi, 1996, p.1).

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH

Thousands of black South African children were exposed to violence both in the form of repression by the State of protest against apartheid as well as participation in violent confrontations with *inter alia* the police and members of different political groupings. Large numbers of children have been detained, assaulted or even killed in the political violence. Based on the results of South African and related studies, Dawes (1990, p. 13) came to the conclusion that "there is no simple relationship between exposure to violence and psychological disturbance or endorsement of violent conduct by children". Psychological disorders are predicted by a number of factors including difficult temperament, on-going marital discord, overcrowding and poverty, maternal psychological disorder and multiple rather than single stressors. The impact of adverse life circumstances, including the effect of political violence, can be reduced. Children who have family or community support are unlikely to develop serious psychological disorders although short-term reactions are not uncommon. The type and duration of the stress should, however, be considered. A child that feels in control will also react more positively. Another important factor in the response to a stressful event, is the socially constructed interpretation (meaning) of the event as well as what the community regards as an appropriate response. Ideological commitment can for example promote resistance to the effects of detention. The relationship between the person witnessing the violence and the victim will also determine how stressful the experience would be.

Taking into account the constant exposure to violence of youngsters in the townships, Setiloane (1991) studied the tolerance of violence of a group of high school children in a black township near Pretoria. Five different reasons for violence

were explored, namely fun, self defence, to protect one's family, for revenge and violence for political reasons. Despite evidence that children exposed to violent behaviour will learn and imitate this behaviour, the results of this study indicated a rejection of violence regardless of the reason for the violence.

Identification with political role models can also facilitate violent behaviour. However, Dawes (1990, p. 27) concluded that "where the youthful political activist is highly socialised in the political ideals of the struggle and accepts the discipline of the movement, his or her violence will be contained within the context of political struggle".

According to Cairns and Dawes (1996) research on ethnic and political violence should use ethnographic approaches that will lead to a better understanding of the cultural and ideological contexts within which people experience and cope with violence; research should include studies on the longer-term emotional outcomes of violence; and the research should be framed within developmental theory. The role of age, gender and context are illustrated in the following empirical studies involving South African children.

In 1986 four squatter communities near Crossroads in the Western Cape were burnt to the ground. A number of people were killed, many were injured and 70 000 left homeless. These people were exposed to weeks of episodic violent conflict and major material loss; many of them were relocated. Dawes, Tredoux and Feinstein (1989) studied the impact of this event on black Xhosa-speaking children under the age of eighteen. They were concerned with symptoms of psychological distress and the attitudes of the children toward the protagonists in the conflict. The subjects were divided into three age groups (2 to 6 years; 7 to 11 years; and 12 to 17 years) and a distinction was made between boys and girls.

Parents reported on symptoms of emotional, conduct and physical disorders that had not been present before the attacks, but were present two months thereafter. Stress symptoms were displayed by 32,4% of the children and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) could be diagnosed for 9,2% of the children. Proportionally more boys than girls had symptoms in the youngest age group; boys and girls were similar in middle childhood; by adolescence girls had the higher incidence of symptomatic behaviour. Fears were the most frequent symptom across all age groups and for both sexes with the most frequently expressed fear being of security-force personnel. Next most frequent across all age groups were changes in emotional expression. Sleep problems occurred in the case of children under seven years old, regression for children under 12 years old and somatic complaints for children older than 11 years. The data also indicated that children whose mothers were diagnosed as having PTSD were significantly more likely to have multiple symptoms of stress.

Dawes *et al.* (1989) referred to findings from several sites of political conflict that support their findings: Symptom patterns vary with developmental level and as a function of gender and that the resilience of mothers has been seen as a buffer against stress in children. Their study also indicated that the children's views of those responsible for the political conflict were shaped by their exposure to the conflict.

Magwaza, Killian, Petersen and Pillay (1993) conducted their study among preschool children (2 to 7 years) in the informal settlements inland of Port Shepstone in KwaZulu-Natal. A distinction was made between children from an area with relatively fewer incidents of political violence and those from an area that experienced many incidents of severe violence. Creche teachers were used to gather the data and at the same time they were trained as counsellors. This involved the ability to identify children who are severely traumatized for referral to professional mental health workers as well as basic counselling skills that they could use to assist children and their caregivers.

Children were evaluated for the presence or absence of 12 diagnostic criteria for PTSD. Less than four symptoms were regarded as normal, between four and six symptoms as mild and more than seven symptoms as severe. Drawings by the children were evaluated in terms of 13 emotional indicators and the contents scored in terms of five categories, for example many people running away. Less than four emotional indicators were regarded as normal, four to eight as mild and more than nine emotional indicators as severe.

Eighty-eight percent of the children from the area with the greater incidence of violence displayed four or more post traumatic stress disorder symptoms while 55% of the children from the less violent area displayed four or more symptoms. Most of these could be classified as mild. The frequency of PTSD symptoms was evenly distributed between boys and girls.

The analysis of the drawings indicated that 84% of the children drew action figures associated with violence. The children with many emotional indicators on their drawings were, however, less likely to suffer from PTSD while those with relatively fewer emotional indicators on their drawings were more likely to be categorized as suffering from PTSD. These results have important implications for trauma intervention programmes, namely that children should be encouraged to externalize their trauma in order to begin the process of psychological reconstruction.

According to Straker, Mendelsohn, Moosa and Tudin (1996) the kind of trauma and forms of violence experienced by children in South Africa were factors of the political context at a given time. They distinguished between the following three contexts: The period 1986-1987 was characterized by open conflict between the State and township youths resulting in running battles in the townships; during 1988-1989 State repression led to a period of relative calm; intense intergroup conflict and social disintegration characterized the period 1990-1992. Straker *et al.* (1996) conducted their study among black South African youth in the township of Alexandra at these three points in history. Their aim was to determine any relationship between the political context and the type and frequency of exposure to particular incidents of violence, the perceptions of township life, and the degree of emotional distress experienced.

Some significant differences were found for the three contexts. The period 1990-1992 saw a significant decrease in the mention of material hardship as something that made township life difficult. This was despite the fact that the subjects from each period were similar regarding economic circumstances. There was, however, a significant increase in the mention of violence, negative affects such as mistrust and hostility and nongovernmental political actors as sources of difficulty in the townships for this period. With regard to incidents of violence witnessed by the respondent or happening to someone the respondent knew well, lower frequencies of arrest or detention and 'necklasing' were reported for 1988-1989, a time when open conflict was not evident. During this period there was a significant increase in the number of reports of assaults against the self - beatings by teachers most commonly accounted for these experiences. The level of psychological distress did not differ significantly for the three groups.

The authors concluded that although youths reported a high exposure to violence in all three contexts, only when the violence was experienced in the context of intracommunity conflict (1990-1992) was it subjectively seen as problematic. The experience of violence as problematic or not seemed to depend on the meaning of the violence which was dependent on the context within which the violence occurred. The earlier violence was connected to a liberation struggle whereas in 1992 criminal and political violence could not be clearly differentiated from one another during intracommunity conflict; violence no longer had a clear political objective.

In an earlier article on the results of part of the same study, Turton, Straker and Moosa (1991) indicated similarities in the experience of political violence and more habitual forms of violence. They described the 1986 period as a time of overtly political acts. The violence of the 1989 period could, however, be described as politically determined or 'usual' apartheid-related conditions in community settings. As mentioned both groups were concerned with material hardship and crime, were over-exposed to violence and the majority were psychologically distressed (dysphoric affect, negative self-regard and feelings of anger were most common). Significant differences were found only in the case of exposure to unrest-related violence. Security forces and political organizations as the perpetrators of violence were identified by a greater percentage in the case of the first group while no difference was found with regard to criminal elements and social networks as perpetrators. This earlier article also referred to factors that made life in the township easier for both groups, namely education, recreation and network interactions.

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Providing education for the 'lost generation'

The National Institute for Community Education is a non-government organization responsible for the co-ordination of the establishment of community colleges. Community colleges will attempt to educate and train the 'lost generation': school drop-

outs, illiterates and students who cannot gain entry into schools, tertiary institutions or the workplace. The primary aim of these colleges is to meet the educational needs of the community in which they are situated and courses are designed in co-operation with representatives from *inter alia* labour unions, industry and commerce. Zuma (1991) described five areas of training in which community colleges could provide: A college division that deals with traditional aspects of study (after completion of these courses students can go out to work or transfer to tertiary institutions); a vocational technical education that covers the entire range of technical and vocational courses demanded by the environment in which the college is located; remedial or development education that provides a high school education; community education involving for example health education; and continuing professional education.

Restoring a culture of learning and teaching in South African schools

Both the family and the school are important for the transmission of societal rules and morals. The family is also responsible for the child's basic emotional and physical needs. The social disintegration in the South African townships implies that the family often cannot serve as a support system for the children. A general breakdown in respect for authority and a lack of discipline prevails in both the home and the school. This is reflected in the conflict and violence experienced in South African schools.

In view of the extent of the negative effect of violence on the educational climate, prevention and intervention programmes should be co-ordinated on a national level to ensure a proper learning environment in all South African schools. The discussion on the incidence of school violence, however, indicates that in the case of some schools, security in the form of fencing, police protection, and security guards is a prerequisite for any further positive actions. So are addressing the problems of drugs, alcohol and the carrying of weapons.

In South Africa dealing with conflict and unrest in schools has become an integral part of a principal's task (Bondesio, 1992; Du Toit, 1991; Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991). Van der Westhuizen *et al.* (1991) distinguished four categories of unrest episodes, namely intergroup, community, interschool and conflict against departmental policies. Unrest situations exhibit characteristics of crisis situations that require the use of non-routine procedures which are usually developed as a person deals with a crisis. Although the choice of conflict-resolution technique (problem solving, dominating, compromising, smoothing and avoiding) should be influenced by the situation, they found that the dominating strategy was used most often to resolve unrest. When an unrest/crisis situation arises, the school should ideally have intervention programmes to identify pupils in distress, ensure co-operation between parents, school staff, the community and the pupils involved and ensure follow-up procedures (Burns, 1990; Poland, 1994; Van der Wart, 1990). Counselling and psychological services should be available for pupils.

Although the policies implemented in the schools are often dependent on the education department, the principal should accept responsibility for implementing an overall violence prevention strategy. The literature on school violence focuses on organizational structures and practical measures to prevent and deal with a crisis situation (Bondesio, 1992; Burns, 1990; Du Toit, 1991; Poland, 1994; Stephens, 1994; Van der Wart, 1990; Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991). Although these structures are multidimensional there is an emphasis on safety and dealing with violent incidents. Comprehensive programmes include: Creating a safe, welcoming, violence-free school environment; including violence prevention in the curriculum through *inter alia* skills training (refer to Appendix A for an example of a skills training programme); early and ongoing identification of students at risk of violent behaviour; establishing a code of behaviour; procedures for dealing with violent incidents and its aftermath; training to recognize symptoms of trauma-related stress; staff development; as well as home, school and community involvement. In the South African situation it is important that more attention be given to school-community relationships and the role of the community in education policy-making (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991). This process should not involve only the principal and the education department. Möller and Maimane (1992) also referred to a tremendous need for participation of the teacher in democratic decision making in order to maintain authority and discipline.

School programmes should focus on providing students with knowledge of their society and on developing attitudes, values and skills to help them cope with *inter alia* conflict. According to Carl (1994, p. 11): "This should enable children ... to accept

their responsibilities to live in a peaceful, independent and responsible manner in a community, even one that is characterized by violence." Goldstein, Apter and Harootunian (1984) distinguished between psychological intervention to alter the behaviour of students chronically engaged in aggressive acts and psycho-educational programmes aimed at the teaching of desirable behaviour. Larson (1994) made the same distinction between primary prevention that focuses on providing skills and knowledge to deal with conflict to all students, secondary prevention that deals with students who have been identified as at risk for future contributions to a climate of school violence, and tertiary prevention where students with serious conduct problems are helped.

Lombard and Van der Merwe (1996) discussed a number of programmes for teaching students life skills and skills in dealing with conflicts. *Pathways to Peace* (refer to Appendix A for a discussion of this programme) is one such a violence prevention programme that teaches conflict resolution skills (Lions-Quest, 1995). The programme is designed to help students understand the behavioural process that often leads them from conflict to anger on to violence. It helps them to change this behaviour and teaches them skills for conflict resolution. This programme encompasses skills included in most other programmes and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) adapted this programme to suit the needs of South African adolescents (Lombard & Van der Merwe, 1996). The programme has been implemented in a number of schools but the results are not yet available.

Skills taught in a conflict resolution programme should be reinforced beyond the programme in other subject areas. Training students skills to deal constructively with conflict, implies that the teachers and administrators themselves need to be trained in conflict resolution. The involvement of the family and the community are, however, essential to ensure a safe environment in which these skills are strengthened. In many instances violence in the community, poor home environments, lack of trust by parents of a teacher that is not from that area etc. prevent this additional support. Together with the efforts by the school it is necessary to address the extensive socio-economic and political problems. This implies involving community health workers (psychologists, social workers, church organizations etc.).

THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

A study was conducted at South African educational-psychological services with the aim of obtaining the opinion of educational psychologists on the causes of school violence, possible intervention and prevention strategies and their role in implementing these strategies. As this was an exploratory study, it was decided to use a questionnaire on school and community violence that was constructed for school psychologists in the United States. Quantitative analysis was used on this data. Respondents were, however, free to make additional comments and suggestions other than the content covered by the questionnaire. Qualitative analysis of these responses resulted in information that was relevant for the South African context.

Method

The *Needs Assessment on School and Community Violence* was developed by J.H. Straussner and J.C. Conoley (1994) of the Joint Task Force on School and Community Violence of the American Psychological Association and the National Association of School Psychologists. This questionnaire consists of 20 questions to help clarify the professional concerns of school psychologists about violence as well as to determine areas where more knowledge is needed. For 12 of these questions a scaled response ("strongly disagree" to "strongly agree") indicates the extent to which the respondent agrees with a given statement. These questions deal with the effects of school violence on students, the need to train school psychologists to deal with violence, specific knowledge needed by school psychologists to understand and respond to violence, the need for structures in the school to address the problem of violence and the extent to which school psychologists should be involved in this. The next five questions deal with suggestions for interventions, characteristics identifying students that might be inclined to violent behaviour and possible causes for school violence. The respondent has to rank various possibilities. The last three questions deal with the incidence of violence in schools.

South Africa consists of nine provinces. Based on the number of students in each province, the cultural diversity of these students and the incidence of violence in the schools in each province, the questionnaires were sent to educational-psychological services in the provinces, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Province. According to the pupil enrolment statistics for 1991 obtained from the Division for Education Policy and Planning at the HSRC, approximately 50% (4 979 191) of the students in South Africa were in schools in these three provinces. Before the Government of National Unity came into power in 1994, different education departments existed for different racial groups. Although this was legally changed and integration was in process when this study was done, the former structures were to a large extent still in place. The division of schools under the former education departments was therefore taken into consideration for this study. The majority of the students (82%) in the three provinces included in this study resorted under black education departments.

Depending on the department, the questionnaires were sent to the head of psychological services in a department, or of an area, or at an educational aid centre. The objectives of the study were explained and they were asked to distribute the questionnaires to educational psychologists or individuals doing the work of educational psychologists (even if they were not registered) in their department/area/centre.

Of the 275 questionnaires that were sent out 102 were completed and returned; that is 37%. According to Dr D.P. Conradie of the Group: Social Dynamics at the HSRC (personal communication, 13 April 1995) a return rate of 33% can normally be expected. A sample size of 60 is adequate for qualitative analysis provided that all types of answers are covered, while the sample size for quantitative analysis depends on the statistical technique used.

The total sample was divided into two groups based on the results of the three questions on the incidence of violence in the schools. The respondents had to estimate the percentage of time spent in responding to violence, the percentage of students who had experienced a violent incident at school and the percentage of students who had been known to carry a weapon to school. If respondents chose the category 0-25% for all three questions they were grouped as respondents who worked in relatively non-violent schools (N = 56). If they chose a category indicating more than 25% for any one of the three questions they were grouped as respondents who worked in relatively violent schools (N = 46).

In all three provinces respondents from relatively non-violent as well as relatively violent schools were included. Most of the respondents from the previously black education departments (33 out of 43) indicated that there was violence in the schools in which they worked and these respondents also formed the majority of the relatively violent schools group (33 out of 46). Most respondents from the previously white education departments indicated that there was little violence in the schools in which they worked.

The age of the respondents ranged from 23 to 61 years with an average age of 42 years and approximately half of the respondents were male. The majority of the respondents (53%) had a Master's degree, 14% had a diploma, 12% an undergraduate degree, 18% an Honours degree and 3% a doctorate. However this was an average and did not reflect the situation in all the education departments and consequently in the two subgroups where the distribution was as follows: Respondents working in relatively non-violent schools - diploma 5%, undergraduate degree 7%, Honours degree 14%, Master's degree 68% and doctorate 6%; Respondents working in relatively violent schools - diploma 24%, undergraduate degree 17%, Honours degree 24% and Master's degree 35%. Most of the respondents worked (although they were not necessarily registered) as educational psychologists and the years of experience as an educational psychologist ranged from 1 to 25 with an average experience of 7 years. Only about 10% of the respondents have received prior training on school and community violence. Approximately half of the respondents indicated that the schools where they worked were in urban or suburban areas while the rest of the respondents worked either in rural areas or in both urban and rural areas. Most of the respondents worked with children in both primary and secondary schools.

Results of the quantitative analysis

The first 12 questions dealt with the needs regarding training and resources to deal with school violence. For each of the questions a respondent could score from one to five, indicating the extent to which they agreed with the statement with

maximum agreement scoring five. Questions 1 and 2 dealt with the need for a profile of violence including information on the student behaviour and the situation. Questions 4, 9, 10, 11 and 12 dealt with the need to train school psychologists and the school staff in responding to violent behaviour and its consequences as well as to bereavement situations. These questions also covered the need for school psychologists to co-ordinate prevention programmes involving parents and the community. Questions 6, 7 and 8 dealt with the effect of violence on non-violent students, on the climate in the school and on teachers' and psychologists' perceptions of and attitudes toward all students. Questions 3 and 5 dealt with the resources (including the school psychologists' time) available for developing prevention programmes and for dealing with violence. Disagreement with Question 3 indicated a lack of resources whereas agreement with the other statements indicated a problem or need. Frequency distributions of the answers to the questions are given in Table 1 for the two groups of respondents working in relatively non-violent and violent schools. The questions are ordered according to the above groupings.

The next five questions dealt with suggestions for interventions, characteristics identifying students that might be inclined to violent behaviour and possible causes for school violence. For each question the respondents had to rank five suggestions in order of importance from one to five with one being the most important. Frequency distributions of the ranking of possible interventions as most important for the two subgroups (first and second choice) are given in Table 2 and of characteristics and possible causes of violence in Table 3. Some of the respondents did not complete these questions correctly and their data on these questions were not used.

Results of the qualitative analysis

Twenty-five of the respondents from the relatively non-violent schools group and 19 respondents from the relatively violent schools group made additional comments and suggestions (see Appendix B). A thematic analysis of the comments was made. After several readings of the material, comments (or part thereof) that referred to the same topic were grouped together. Such a comment (or part thereof) could be grouped under more than one topic. These topics were further categorized under five broad titles. The topics in each category as well as examples of relevant comments are given below. The contents of the comments and differences between the subgroups are discussed in the next section.

The political context and racial factors, the socio-economic circumstances of the students, and their home situations were mentioned as causes of school violence (a total of 10 respondents in this category).

> ... However, violence is picking up as a result of the political awareness and change of the late eighties and early nineties. Poverty and urbanisation are also having an effect. Children are left in charge of homes while parents are in towns. Without adequate or rather non-existent parental supervision and provision the children turn to delinquent behaviour.

The next category dealt with exposure to school violence (a total of 19 respondents). Educational-psychological services did not necessarily deal with the conflict experienced in schools, some rural areas experienced minimum violence and the former white education departments reported an absence of violence in their schools. It was mentioned that the establishment of a non-racial education department might imply that more psychologists would need to deal with school violence.

> My opinion is unreliable because we work with white children in urban schools, mainly Afrikaans speaking.

Comments on the lack of educational psychologists (five respondents) were categorized under a division on the availability of school psychological services.

> Appointments of more psychologists at schools is essential. ...

Table 1 Frequency distributions for the questions indicating psychologists' needs regarding school violence

Questions	School psychologists working in relatively non-violent schools (N = 56)					School psychologists working in relatively violent schools (N = 46)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
1	-	2%	2%	46%	50%	-	-	2%	30%	68%
2	-	2%	9%	36%	53%	-	-	2%	52%	46%
4	2%	9%	12%	45%	32%	2%	2%	9%	37%	50%
9	-	-	4%	57%	39%	-	-	2%	37%	61%
10	-	2%	9%	48%	41%	-	-	6%	37%	57%
11	2%	14%	5%	47%	32%	-	-	4%	59%	37%
12	-	2%	-	55%	43%	-	-	-	50%	50%
6	-	2%	-	57%	41%	-	-	4%	35%	61%
7	2%	14%	5%	61%	18%	4%	7%	7%	67%	15%
8	-	-	4%	55%	41%	-	-	6%	33%	61%
3	16%	43%	27%	12%	2%	24%	37%	15%	22%	2%
5	21%	36%	14%	20%	9%	2%	29%	15%	50%	4%

Table 2 Frequency distributions of the ranking of possible interventions as most important for the two subgroups

	School psychologists working in relatively non-violent schools (N = 52)		School psychologists working in relatively violent schools (N = 39)	
	First	Second	First	Second
Interventions by school psychologists in working with violent students				
Individual help	36%	23%	28%	28%
Group help	46%	27%	21%	36%
Family therapy	4%	36%	36%	26%
Behavioural therapy	6%	8%	15%	8%
Other	8%	6%	-	2%
Student activities positively influencing violence				
Clubs	15%	35%	28%	21%
Student government	33%	21%	23%	33%
Civic groups	9%	33%	8%	25%
Religious groups	35%	9%	38%	21%
Other	8%	2%	3%	-

Table 3 Frequency distributions of the ranking of characteristics and possible causes as most important for the two subgroups

	School psychologists working in relatively non-violent schools (N = 52)		School psychologists working in relatively violent schools (N = 39)	
	First	Second	First	Second
Characteristics of students who would demonstrate violent behaviour				
Lack of impulse control	12%	27%	18%	13%
Isolation or poor social skills	9%	10%	10%	15%
Violence in home	25%	25%	44%	26%
History of abuse	12%	17%	13%	23%
Peer acceptance of violence	42%	21%	15%	23%
Criteria which students should demonstrate indicating need for immediate intervention				
Current behaviour	50%	31%	54%	13%
Substance abuse	13%	21%	15%	29%
Family history	2%	6%	13%	15%
History of violent behaviour	12%	21%	15%	28%
Community behaviour	23%	21%	3%	15%
Factors accounting for changes in student behaviour				
Substance abuse	13%	17%	26%	21%
Gangs	35%	17%	15%	28%
Poverty	27%	17%	26%	21%
Violence in media	15%	20%	10%	7%
Lack of community activity	10%	29%	23%	23%

References to the lack of a culture of learning and teaching indicated the negative climate in South African education. Dealing with the educational problems in general and school violence specifically requires a multidimensional approach (a total of 21 respondents in this category). Involvement by the community, the parents, teachers/guidance teachers, the students themselves and co-operation between disciplines were mentioned. Involving various role-players might create communication problems due to different languages and cultures. It would be necessary to establish understanding and trust.

> A whole new culture should be attained in schools. It seems that a lot of pupils are not motivated to work at all, but would rather seek for problems so that they could (mis-) use their democratic rights to demonstrate e.g. it is much easier to walk and demonstrate in the street than to work in class.
>
> Give training for education of life-skills to teachers and parents.
>
> Emphasis must be put on how to identify pupils who are victims of violence - to be identified by teachers and parents - during the training of school psychologists. The need for this type of training cannot be over-emphasized.
>
> Team spirit between the parents, teachers and pupils solves the problems of violence. It also causes effective teaching because there will be communication and trust between the school and the community authorities. My suggestion is parents, teachers, pupils must work together to fight violence.
>
> ... I would also like to suggest that training in violence prevention should be included in teacher training course so that all the teachers in the school fight against violence ...

A number of the respondents (17) commented on the role of the educational psychologist. References were made to counselling of students and parents, violence related training in general, and training in dealing with the victims of violence and the students displaying violent behaviour. The psychologist as consultant to teachers and parents was mentioned and some respondents questioned if educational psychologists should be facilitators of prevention programmes.

> ... School psychologists must be trained to help pupils that have been victims of any form of violence.
>
> ... I suggest that such training program be made available so that school psychologists can be able to benefit and be well-equipped with the necessary skills to handle violent students behaviour.
>
> ... Workshops for school psychologists could be geared toward training of teachers to cope.
>
> ... I remain of the opinion that violence is a macro socio-economic/political/ethnic concern and that to target school psychologists as primary facilitators of intervention programmes would disengage them from potentially more profitable work in psycho-educational support for children with special needs.

Discussion

Various interacting factors are responsible for unrest in South African schools

The discussion on unrest in South African schools indicated that numerous factors have been responsible for school violence over the past two decades. When giving their opinion, the educational psychologists focused on the large scale political, social and economic problems experienced in South Africa. Respondents from both subgroups attributed school violence to the

political context, racial factors, the socio-economic circumstances of the students and their home situations. There was fear that political awareness and political changes might contribute to the climate of violence. According to the respondents these changes resulted in *inter alia* affirmative action which was seen as discrimination, release of political prisoners and the use of former apartheid discrimination as an excuse for irresponsibility by political leaders. Poverty, unemployment, poor living standards and urbanization were mentioned as factors that should be addressed in dealing with the problem of violence. Both political and economical factors were seen to contribute to a lack of discipline and inadequate parental supervision.

Two of the questions in the Needs Assessment dealt with factors accounting for changes in student behaviour that are related to the school and the student's immediate environment. All of the following were regarded as important by the respondents: Violence in the home, peer acceptance of violence, substance abuse, gangs, poverty, violence in the media and lack of community activity.

Exposure of educational psychologists to school violence

The composition of the relatively violent and non-violent schools subgroups in terms of education departments and comments by respondents working in schools in the previously white education departments on the absence of violence in these schools, indicated that this problem is primarily experienced in black schools. Although the educational-psychological services were not necessarily directly involved in the conflict in the schools that they worked in, 54% of the violent schools subgroup indicated that they spent significant proportions of their time dealing with violent students as opposed to 29% of the other group (Question 5 of the Needs Assessment). Regardless of the extent of their exposure to school violence, answers to Questions 6, 7 and 8 of the Needs Assessment indicated that both groups felt that violence had a negative effect on the other students, the school climate, staff's attitude and psychologists' perception of the behaviour of other students.

The provision of school psychological services in South Africa

Most of the respondents - regardless of subgroup - indicated that the schools they worked in did not have the resources to develop violence prevention programmes (Question 3 of the Needs Assessment). This lack of resources does not only refer to dealing with violence in schools. The educational, psychological and social needs in the schools and homes of the majority of South Africans are not provided for. According to Donald (1991) a major problem is the overall shortage of educational psychologists. In the former education departments educational psychologists, educational facilities (special schools, classes and clinics) and special educational services (teacher-counsellors, remedial teachers, speech therapists) were disproportionally distributed. This was reflected in the references to the lack of psychologists by especially the respondents from the relatively violent schools group. A high pupil-teacher ratio was also mentioned.

Through the establishment of one non-racial education system, the existing resources are pooled on a regional base. The educational psychologist to pupil ratio (approximately 1:12 000) is, however, still unmanageable and the services inadequate to provide in the educational needs.

Systemic intervention

School violence forms part of numerous problems experienced in South African education. The educational psychologists who took part in this study commented on the lack of a culture of learning and teaching mentioned earlier in this paper. Various health, socio-economic and educational problems are furthermore interrelated and in dealing with educational problems such as black underachievement (Donald, 1991) and illiteracy (Kriegler, 1988) the focus should be on structural and systemic factors rather than just on the problems of the individual child. These factors are similar to those mentioned as part of a multidimensional approach to school violence and include resource assessment, parent support and preschool programmes, teacher consultation and community involvement.

Both subgroups approved of co-operation with the community and the parents and training of school staff to become involved in violence prevention as well as the involvement of the students themselves through for example student government

and religious groups (Questions 4, 9, 10 and 14 of the Needs Assessment).

The respondents suggestions on violence intervention and prevention also reflected consideration for the context in which school violence occurred. They asked for the involvement of the community to help the schools deal with the problems of violence and the government, the media as well as religion were mentioned in this regard.

The role of the parents not only in dealing with school violence but in the students' upbringing and education in general was mentioned. This included a need for parenting skills to be developed, consultation with the parents on students' problems by *inter alia* the educational psychologist, involvement of the parents in the child's education and training of parents to identify victims of violence as well as in the education of life-skills.

The involvement of the parents was often associated with the role of the teacher - a factor emphasized by both subgroups. Comments on the training of teachers and other staff members included the following: Training on violence prevention and in the education of life-skills; training to identify victims of violence and courses on counselling these victims; workshops on how to deal with violent behaviour and involvement in interviewing and reporting on individuals who manifest violent behaviour; and development of management skills (focus on participative management). Some respondents referred specifically to a need for guidance (including career guidance) as a subject and the important role of the guidance teacher in dealing with school violence.

Involvement of the students themselves included education to prevent violence from an early age, life-skills programmes, and providing recreational and sporting facilities.

References were also made to co-operation between psychologists, teachers and social workers. According to Donald (1991) and Livingstone (1988) multidisciplinary integration (psychology, education, social work and medicine) and skill sharing could be more beneficial and more economical to the community.

The role of the educational psychologist and needs related to their functions

Educational psychology in South Africa follows the medical model of individual diagnoses and treatment of problems. Psychologists will for example focus on the cognitive, motivational or behavioural factors involved in a child that is underachieving and then intervene in these terms. This function may play a crucial role in the educational development of individual children and educational psychologists should be trained to the present level of specialization in order to deal effectively with more complex and specialized problems at individual, family, group and institutional levels (Donald, 1991; Kriegler, 1988).

Educational psychologists are for example instrumental in providing guidance to children suffering from violence related stress as well as in dealing with children with behavioural problems involving aggression or violence (Stephens, 1994). This also involves counselling the parents of the children involved. The respondents in this study indicated that they believed this to be an important function of educational psychologists regarding their role in dealing with school violence. Especially respondents from the relatively violent schools group spent time in working with students who might be prone to violent behaviour and individual help and family therapy were regarded as important by both subgroups (Questions 5 and 13 of the Needs Assessment). (Group help was also rated as a possible intervention.)

A need for training was, however, expressed. Most of the respondents agreed that an understanding of the reasons for violence and a behavioural profile of potentially violent students could help the psychologist (Questions 1 and 2 of the Needs Assessment). To a large extent they agreed with the need for a course on responding to violent student behaviour and its consequences as part of their graduate training and knowledge on bereavement situations and appropriate interventions was also required (Questions 11 and 12). Individual comments also referred to violence related training in general and identifying victims of violence and dealing with behavioural problems specifically.

The medical model might, however, not be an adequate or sufficient model of intervention where problems in South African education, including violence related problems, are concerned. The lack of educational psychologists and services as well as the importance of the contextual and causal role played by the educational system itself have been mentioned. One

solution involves the educational psychologist working as a consultant in relation to teachers, parents or others who have daily contact with the child (Donald, 1991; Larson, 1994; Nuttall & Kalesnik, 1987). These individuals would gain in psychological insights, skills and problem-solving ability and less psychologists would be needed to help more children. The training of teachers and parents by educational psychologists to identify and counsel victims of violence and to cope with students with behavioural problems related to violence, has also been mentioned by the respondents in our study.

Should the educational psychologist be responsible for the initiation and negotiation of the systemic interventions referred to in the previous section? A large percentage of the respondents agreed with the statement that school psychologists should take a leading position in coordinating prevention programmes in the schools that they work in (Question 4 of the Needs Assessment). With the exception of two respondents from the relatively non-violent schools group who stated that educational psychologists should not be the primary facilitators of these programmes, this issue was not mentioned under comments and suggestions. Although the traditional role of the educational psychologist might be expanded to include involvement in primary prevention and community education, mediating community consultative and preventative work might require someone with a more multidisciplinary training. Kriegler (1988) suggested a new professional registration category, namely mental health workers. These professionals will be trained in skills that are not simply a truncated version of the professional psychologist's but will include psychological, special educational, social work and paramedical skills.

CONCLUSION

For the past twenty years the climate of violence in South Africa has been reflected in our schools. This resulted in what is called 'the lost generation' as well as a lack of a culture of learning and teaching. Research on specifically the influence of political violence has reported on the importance of the context in which the violence is experienced, the availability of support and the social meaning of this violence on the psychological and social development of South African children. Intervention and prevention strategies implemented to deal with school violence and its educational and psychological effects, include: The establishment of community colleges; organizational structures involving the school and the community to deal with crisis/unrest situations; psycho-educational programmes such as the training of life-skills; and community programmes where social workers and psychologists teach certain skills to parents and teachers to enable them to work with children with problems.

The structured questions in the study done to obtain the opinion of educational psychologists on their role regarding the issue of school violence, dealt with the following: Involvement of the parents and the community; the training of psychologists and school staff with regard to violence; the role of the school psychologist; and the type of intervention needed in general. Probably because of the high incidence of school and community violence in South Africa these questions did not discriminate as the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with most of the statements. The comments and suggestions made by the respondents were, however, more relevant to school violence and how to deal with it in the South African context. The results of this study can be used to formulate more specific questions for future research.

The restructuring of education departments to provide in the needs of a non-racial education system, was still in process when this paper was written. The information obtained from such a study might differ after the integration process has been completed and the new structures have been in place for some time. However, South Africa will probably be undergoing continuous change for the next few years and any information that might help with this process is valuable.

The results of our study indicated that regardless of whether the respondents were exposed to violence in the schools they worked in, they agreed that school violence had a very negative effect on the educational climate and should be dealt with urgently in order to establish a proper learning environment in all South African schools. The attitude to this study and to the involvement of educational psychologists in finding solutions was mostly positive. Many of the suggestions made by the respondents were, however, vague in terms of practical implications. A reason for this could be limited exposure to violence due to the concentration of violence in certain areas and schools as well as non-involvement of educational-psychological

services in conflict in the schools. A large percentage of the respondents furthermore did not have the opportunity for specialized psychological and/or violence related training.

Even though the opinions of the educational psychologists did not reflect an underlying theory or extensive knowledge of intervention and prevention strategies, it was based on practical experience. Integrating the results of this study with suggestions from relevant literature on addressing the social and educational needs in South Africa, was therefore meaningful. One of the respondents remarked that "violence is a macro socio-economic/political/ethnic concern ...". This opinion was reflected in the literature review and in the respondents' comments. Violence in South African schools forms part of political, socio-economic and educational problems. Systemic intervention that acknowledges the context of these problems is therefore needed. This implies an approach to dealing with educational problems, including school violence, that involves students, school personnel (school psychologists, social workers, administrators and teachers), parents and the community. The educational psychologist could act as consultant to parents and school staff. This sharing of skills implies that help is provided on a large scale - bearing in mind the lack of psychologists and psychological services - and that the focus is on the community rather than just on the individual child. Although educational psychologists should extend their skills to community consultative and preventative work, a professional trained in multidisciplinary skills will be better equipped to initiate and mediate such strategies. The educational psychologist's main function would still be to provide psychological counselling and therapy to children and their families. It is therefore imperative that the training needs in educational psychology in general and in violence related skills specifically, should be addressed.

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APPENDIX A

PATHWAYS TO PEACE: A VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMME THAT TEACHES CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS (LIONS-QUEST, 1995)

The dominant approaches to instruction in South African schools tend to be competition and individualized learning. This programme uses a third alternative, namely co-operative learning. This implies that a group with a shared goal participates in a project and the outcome results from common effort. Each person's success is linked with every other person's. Ideas and materials are shared, labour is divided and everyone in the group is rewarded for successful completion of the task. Group work teaches the students to: Listen carefully; care about the success of other group members; respect and recognize the unique contributions of others; succeed by giving and receiving help; contribute to the group goal; and evaluate what they did as a group.

Teachers are supplied with a curriculum manual, students receive a workbook each, information is given to families on dealing with conflicts and negotiating peaceful solutions, and a manual is provided to help principals accomplish the goals of the programme. The programme can be implemented as a short six-month programme or as a once-a-week programme spanning an academic year.

The goals of the programme are to change students attitudes about their interaction with others, to increase their knowledge about non-violent techniques and to encourage behaviour that uses this knowledge. Students are taught essential life skills such as forming positive relationships, resisting negative peer pressure, communicating effectively and making wise decisions. More advanced skills include managing anger and resolving conflict peacefully. The basic assumption of this model is that conflict is inevitable and that one response to conflict is anger. We can manage anger by recognizing its signals, identifying positive thoughts and strategies to handle it, and taking action to remain calm. More effective responses to conflict include problem solving and avoiding dangerous confrontations. Students must be prepared to deal constructively with adverse events and negative modelling. The adults close to the person must reinforce positive behaviour.

Specific skills that are taught: a) Building self-discipline, responsibility and self-confidence: Their should be ground rules for behaviour in the classroom set by the teachers and the students. Rules like listening respectfully and taking turns help to defuse conflict. Students should be learned ways to enhance their own self-confidence as well as that of others. This will help to prevent destructive responses to conflict. b) Communicating effectively and co-operating with others: Students should learn to accept differences and to see other people as having special skills and abilities to share, families and backgrounds they are proud of, and feelings and opinions that deserve respect. They will then accept others' opinions as different, not wrong. Listening skills are essential for good communication - focusing on the speaker, asking questions, restate what they have heard. c) Managing anger, reducing the level of tension in conflicts and resolving conflicts: Students should be learned to be assertive as opposed to being aggressive. They should also learn to express opinions and emotions in positive ways. They should be able to tell the other person what is bothering them, why it is bothering them and how they would like the other person to behave instead. d) Thinking critically: They should *inter alia* be able to resist negative peer pressure and suggest healthy alternative activities. They should know how to solve problems and that there are choices other than violence for responding to conflict. They should state and discuss the problem, list possible solutions and choose a positive option everyone can agree with. e) Providing service related to conflict resolution to others.

APPENDIX B

COMMENTS BY RESPONDENTS

RELATIVELY NON-VIOLENT SCHOOLS GROUP

A whole new culture should be attained in schools. It seems that a lot of pupils are not motivated to work at all, but would rather seek for problems so that they could (mis) use their democratic rights to demonstrate e.g. it is much easier to walk and demonstrate in the street than to work in class.

Die kwessie van geweld sal moontlik met nuwe skoolsituasies onsekerheid en gepaardgaande swak sosio-ekonomiese situasies meer voorkom as tot op hede. Voorkomende maatreëls wat veral die gesin en skool insluit is nodig. Hier is die sielkundige dienste seker die sleutelfigure maar het self opleiding nodig nie oppervlakkig, maar teoreties en prakties.

- Workshops for teachers in dealing with violent behaviour is particularly relevant as they are at the foreground of violent behaviour in schools - pupils are referred to school psychologists after the violent episode.
- Workshops for school psychologists could be geared toward training of teachers to cope.

The psychologist to pupil ratio (Ex H.O.D.) 1:13000 does not allow for all cases to receive appropriate intervention. Cases are prioritized = Some are not seen at all.

- Development of management skills in all administrators - teachers in schools.
- Training of all school personnel in participative management.
- Upliftment of the general standard of living of all people.
- Develop parenting skills.
- Emphasise religion.
- Develop a culture of learning.

- i find this questionnaire ill considered and believe the information you will gather from it will be misleading.
- School psychologists do not work at one school but at many. Hence opinions expressed here refer to schools in the plural and not singular.

Major block to our effectiveness:

- Language barrier - few psychologists speak more than smattering of Zulu. Many pupils speak poor English, most teachers speak English.
- We still await decisions from the Education Department about our "region", "focus" and roles.
- Training in mediation (in schools) and language classes should commence forthwith.
- Networking with HSRC about assessment and screening; new directions away from a medical model.
- Anticipate that being "outsiders" (not of the community) has both advantages (neutral mediator) and disadvantages (racial stereotypes of school pupils/teachers could lead to rejection).

Die voorbeeld van die politieke leiers, hulle subtiele boodskappe waar onverantwoodelikheid "verskoon" word op grond van eertydse diskiminasie; die sosialistiese boodskappe om alles van die staat te ontvang; die verskoning van ernstige halsmisdade en korrupsie - m.a.w 'n kultuur van nie-aanspreeklikheid word deur politieke leiers bevorder - dit alles bevorder

misdadigheid en terreur. Hoe om dit te bekamp? Begin by die ouers om kinders met die regte waardes groot te maak/weerstand teen groepsdruk te ontwikkel. Gemeenskapswerk deur skoolsielkundiges moet kontak met ouers insluit. Erens moet gesaghebbende optrede moontlik wees.

My comments are restricted to NED schools where there is little violence - certainly there are many cases of emotional abuse and family discord. The questionnaire in my opinion, is ill-timed owing to the fact that as from 1 April (one education department) many of the NED school psychologists will probably be more involved in "other department" schools and will be calling more for training in the handling of violence.

More time should be spend on (1) life skills programmes (2) bridging the culture differences (3) parenting skills.

I currently work in an Ex Department which still retains many of the privileges of "white" status. Violence is not a significant issue in schools within this Department or in the communities where the schools are located. However, I have colleagues and friends in other Departments where this is quite different. I remain of the opinion that violence is a macro socio-economic/political/ethnic concern and that to target school psychologists as primary facilitators of intervention programmes would disengage them from potentially more profitable work in psycho-educational support for children with special needs.

Give training for education of life-skills to teachers and parents.

Our schools are mainly in a rural setting where violence is very minimal. However, violence is picking up as a result of the political awareness and change of the late eighties and early nineties. Poverty and urbanisation are also having an effect. Children are left in charge of homes while parents are in towns. Without adequate or rather non-existent parental supervision and provision the children turn to delinquent behaviour.

Violence at school is mostly caused by children from well-to-do families. Children from poor families know their situations of poverty at home and behave themselves, many parents who are educated or who are better off financially originally are from poor family backgrounds, but their children become spoilt.

It would be highly appreciated if this topical issue could receive attention in the form of workshop within the broad spectrum of life. In other words, there should be sessions where we have psychologists (school psychologists included), social workers and teachers to further work on this issue. Questions 18-20 proved difficult to me because I am not directly attached to a school, but serving in the office hence the low estimate on percentages. There should be many conferences and symposia organised for moulding the character of the pupils, more especially at a youth stage.

- Through PTSA community involvement in addressing the question of violence is highly recommended.
- Media should also be used to address the issue.
- Preoccupation of students through involving them in some projects may distract them from violence involvement.

School violence is not directed to us as Circuit Officials. Through one's experience one becomes aware of it, as it occurs in many schools today. I strongly encourage that school psychologists should deal directly with it especially if they can be trained for this. I would suggest that school psychologists should work very closely with the guidance counsellors together with the remedial teachers including the principals of the schools to reduce school violence.

Since I work mainly in the "old TED" schools, group violence doesn't play such a big role up to now. So I am not so familiar

with it yet.

I am based at a school psychological centre rendering a service to 15 schools (junior primary to high schools). The issue of violence has so far played only a limited (possibly insignificant) role in my work. I personally wonder whether the question/issue of community violence falls under the wing of school psychology or not. Perhaps this should be designated to school social workers?

No violence in Ex TED schools.

Geen kennis van geweld nie. Rede - werk tans met blanke leerlinge wat relatief geen/min probleme rakende bg het.

'n Vraelys in Afrikaans asseblief!

My opinion is unreliable because we work with white children in urban schools, mainly Afrikaans speaking.

In the area that we are working currently - no violence occur as we have urban schools with European children. We do not really have any knowledge on this matter.

As I have only a little contact with the township community - my evaluation is based on experience in a restricted group - it includes children who attend "white" schools in the urban area.

RELATIVELY VIOLENT SCHOOLS GROUP

School violence can be described as cultural dualism which occurs worldwide and which does not respect boundaries of race, colour or creed. That this problem is now apparently being addressed in South Africa, is highly commendable and one can only express the hope that the research in this area may lead to a more harmonious society.

- Find a democratic, non-racial government.
- Racial perceptions like affirmative action is the apartheid that whites deserve will cause enormous tension and violence etc.
- Political stability where the economy grows diminish violence because there are jobs and less poverty.

Emphasis must be put on how to identify pupils who are victims of violence - to be identified by teachers and parents - during the training of school psychologists. The need for this type of training cannot be over-emphasized.

- Appointments of more psychologists at schools is essential.
- Culture of learning and teaching must prevail at our schools in order to eliminate violence.
- Relationship structures - trust, understanding and authority are very important.

Exposure on violence matters of school psychologists is really essential as they are the people on the ground and arming them is vital. In addition some of the staff members should be given courses on counselling the traumatised violence victims.

Urgent undertakings should be undertaken so as to curb school violence from becoming the order of the day.

I think there should be seminars where guidance teachers meet in order to discuss the solutions in dealing with the violence in schools. Experts can be invited in order to contribute in remedying this situation which affects teachers attitudes and other schoolmates. Some violence is through the neglect of children by their parents. Some cannot afford what other pupils have e.g. school uniform.

After filling in this questionnaire, it dawned on my mind that it would be necessary for the government to be actively involved in trying to combat violence in the schools. It has a serious effect on the other pupils, and therefore needs to be stopped. If we plan to have smooth running in schools, it would be very good if all structures of the community can unite, in order to safeguard the interests of pupils. It is true when one considers that violence affects all the faculties of pupils. School psychologists must be trained to help pupils that have been victims of any form of violence.

- I was at a high school before where there was a lot of violence - the school was surrounded by shacks - so both students and teachers felt very unsafe - such that students had to carry weapons - though they were not making any dangerous advances to teachers, when ever they quarrelled they wanted to use weapons.
- Lack of guidance as a subject and as a service I think is the cause of the violent behaviour - I think there needs to be serious moves at implementing guidance and seeing that it is followed up.

Team spirit between the parents, teachers and pupils solves the problems of violence. It also causes effective teaching because there will be communication and trust between the school and the community authorities. My suggestion is parents, teachers, pupils must work together to fight violence.

Our psychological services section does not directly address the problem of violence at schools.

Some of these questions are directed to school psychologists based at schools. I am stationed at the circuit. Anyhow, I suggest that such training program be made available so that school psychologists can be able to benefit and be well-equipped with the necessary skills to handle violent students behaviour.

I think if you can organise psychologists, specialists to go in-service training in order to help in counselling the students, parents. Lack of psychologists in our area violence is increasing day by day, I encourage you to proceed with your organization of helping us to prevent violence and make students to learn.

I would like to suggest that education to prevent violence in pupils should be done from an early age i.e. from pre-primary to senior secondary school. I would also like to suggest that training in violence prevention should be included in teacher training course so that all the teachers in the school fight against violence not only the school psychologist including in-service training on the subject under discussion.

Lack of parental control contributes greatly. Lawlessness and lack of activities among communities. Recreation centres and sporting facilities should be erected. The services of specialists such as clinical psychologists, social workers, professionals and facilities should be made available.

The pupil-teacher ratio should be normalized to the one agreed upon. Individual attention, guidance and teaching should be encouraged. Pupils must have enough time for extramural activities and places of entertainment. Career guidance workshops should be held regularly. Teachers should interview who manifest violent behaviour individually and regularly, and a file or files kept for future reference. Parents should be involved in the children's educations, interviews, problem solving and their

views on the problems respected. Parents representations should be encouraged.

Would suggest that human resources such as appointment of school psychologist at each post-primary school in the country be the first on the priority list of employment of school personnel so that violent behavioural patterns manifested by students can be surmounted.

Violence is better at our place, the only problem is that the culture of learning and teaching is no longer in our schools. We need better ways of restoring the culture of teaching and learning in our schools.

It was very difficult to answer your questions since you are not specific e.g my experience is divided into categories e.g. physical, emotional and sexual violence or abuse. Your research is on violence; what type? I am not very sure. Please be specific so that we actually answer the relevant question as it need to be addressed. Again some of the cases are not reported to us since the local structures deal with them and do not want the cases to be reported to the schools nor the police. In most cases the violence is only known when the child experiences trauma and the teachers refer him/her to us.